

# **COLUMBIA RIVER MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

## **Purpose and Scope**

To develop a regional fishery management plan for the Columbia River whereby fisheries are managed to meet or exceed the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), recovery, and conservation goals, hatcheries programs are aligned to achieve fishery and watershed populations objectives, and harvest management measures protect and promote the long term well-being of the commercial and recreational fisheries that support a sustainable future for fishing dependent communities.

## **Process**

The Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife Commissions will establish a Columbia River Fish Working Group (Committee). The committee will be comprised of 6 members that function by consensus, three Fish and Wildlife Commissioners from each state; in addition two members from the Director's Office from each state will be designated to serve on the committee as support to their respective commission members. Each state, working within their respective commission decision making processes, will appoint up to 6 individuals to serve as advisors to the committee.

The process will have two phases. The first phase will address the allotment of the harvest opportunity of summer and spring salmon between sport and commercial fishery sectors below Bonneville Dam. The first phase will also construct a communication plan for the dissemination of information developed and considered through the entire committee process.

The second phase of the process will address conservation goals, fishery objectives, and hatchery funding and production strategies, throughout the Columbia River system.

An independent facilitator will conduct the committee meetings. A recorder will be appointed to document the committee's discussions and recommendations. Each state delegation will assign a point-of-contact to work with the facilitator to structure meeting agendas. The costs of the process are to be shared equally by the two state fish and wildlife agencies. The Committee will update the full Commissions as needed throughout the process.

The committee meetings will be open to the public. The committee may provide at their discretion an opportunity for members of the public to address the committee.

## **Committee Charge**

The committee charge is to develop and submit to the respective Fish and Wildlife Commissions, a consensus recommendation for a management plan for the Columbia River that is developed in two phases described below. In the development of each phase, the committee will take into consideration up-river conservation and fishery needs as well as ocean fishery needs.

In recognition of the immediate need to address the allocation issues associated with the spring and summer chinook fishery, the committee will develop the plan in two phases.

- Phase I will focus on developing a recommendation to present to the respective commissions regarding the allocation of spring and summer chinook harvest opportunities between the primary stakeholder interests. The committee's recommendation should include the term of the allocation recommendation and consider the work that was done within the Stakeholder Process.

During Phase I, the Committee will design the process to achieve the desired outcome for Phase II including a communication plan. The committee will be tasked with delivering their Phase I recommendations to the respective commissions by November 15, 2008.

- Phase II will focus on the development of a long-term management plan for the Columbia River consistent with the existing recovery plans and include a description of fishery management objectives, methods of selective harvest, harvest allocation principle, and hatchery production that is aligned with fishery management objectives and hatchery reform. The state committee delegations will provide periodic briefings to the respective commissions. The committee will target completion of the first draft and briefings to the respective commissions by September 2009.

#### **Role of the Advisors**

The advisors will advise the committee members as they develop their recommendations. Among the expectations of the advisors, is the willingness to communicate and represent the diversity of views from the constituencies they are there to represent. In addition, the advisors will play a key role in identifying fishery objectives in a manner that represents the diverse interests in the Columbia River including rural communities and the support infrastructure. The advisors may be asked to assemble and coordinate panel presentations on information and policy topics requested by the Committee.

#### **Establishing the Committee**

Working within their respective internal process, each chairperson from the Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife Commissions will designate their committee members by August 1, 2008. Each state delegation will designate their advisors by August 29, 2008. The state delegations will coordinate with each other in selecting the advisors to ensure that, as a whole, the advisors represent the diverse interests in the lower river. In addition, the state delegations will have the flexibility to change their advisors, appointed through their respective decision making processes, as needed to address the breadth and differences in topics as the process transition from Phase I to Phase II. Committee members will select the facilitator and recorder by September 5, 2008.